

Successful Life

The main purpose of everyone is to succeed in life. They do everything in the name of success. People in the world always try to go forward in their education, economy, employment and social situation for their success. Doing all of these things finally they hope to spend a happy life. The final goal of every one is happiness. Hence, real success depends on whether our happiness increases day by day. At the end of our life, if we are unhappy, everything that we earned in our entire life is meaningless and useless as well. When we see the world, it is clear that when people are getting old age their happiness and satisfactoriness gradually decreases. If our happiness or inner peace doesn't increase gradually, it is unable to say that we are successful. In this situation, as wise people we have to realize how really happiness continuously increases. Here, understanding of the Buddhist point of view about happiness and success is very important.

Buddhism not only describes the final liberation or enlightenment but also how to succeed in this life with our wealth, worldly needs and responsibilities. Hence, as a practical timeless teaching, first Buddhism states the path how to succeed and to be happy in this short life. In the discourse of Vyagghapajja, the Buddha points out four qualities that lead to a lay person's happiness and well-being in this life. Then Buddhism explains how to succeed hereafter.

On one occasion, when the Buddha was at *Kakkrapatta*, Dighajanu (Vyagghapajja) came to visit the Buddha. After bowing down, Vyagghapajja, sitting on one side, said the Buddha; “We are lay people enjoying sensuality; living crowded with spouses and children; using Kasi fabrics and sandalwood; wearing garlands, scents, and creams; handling gold and silver. May the Blessed One teach the Dhamma for those like us, for our happiness and well-being in this life and in future lives.”

Here the Buddha kindly explains the facts to him how to succeed in this life and hereafter. First, for this life;

Cattārome, vyagghapajja, dhammā kulaputtassa diṭṭha-dhamma-hitāya samvattanti diṭṭha-dhamma-su-khāya. Katame cattāro? Uṭṭhānasampadā, ārakkhasampadā, kalyāṇamittatā, samajīvitā.

Four conditions, Vyagghapajja, conduce to a householder's wellbeing and happiness in this very life. They are;

1. The accomplishment of determined effort (*Utthana-sampada*)
2. The accomplishment of watchfulness (*Arakkha-sampada*)
3. Good friendship (*Kalyanamittata*)
4. Balanced livelihood (*Sama-jivikata*).

He who as an intelligent person hopes to succeed in this life should work hard to succeed in education and employment. A lot of advice can be seen in Buddhism pointing out the success and

necessity of education and employment. Giving a good education to their children is one of the responsibilities of parents. Also, earning wealth working courageously and righteously is appreciated and encouraged in Buddhism. Not only earning money, but watchfulness of that wealth is also determined in Buddhism. Having good virtuous friends is useful for the success of this life. Buddhism always emphasizes the noble association which helps all good areas in life. Further a wise person should have an ability to manage his spending according to what he earns. If someone can succeed in these four areas, he is able to be successful and happy in this world.

Secondly, the discourse points out the path of future life;

Cattārome, vyagghapajja, dhammā kulaputtassa sam-parā-ya-hitāya samvattanti sam-parā-ya-su-khāya. Katame cattāro? Saddhāsampadā, sīlasampadā, cāgasampadā, paññāsampadā.

Four conditions, Vyagghapajja, conduce to a householder's weal, success and happiness in his future life. They are;

1. The accomplishment of confidence (*Saddhā-sampadā*)
2. The accomplishment of virtue or morality (*Sīla-sampadā*)
3. The accomplishment of charity or generosity (*Cāga-sampadā*)
4. The accomplishment of wisdom or intelligence (*Paññā-sampadā*)

When someone comes to this level, he should have a clear understanding about the Karmic law and the dependent origination which is the very important understanding that a person can gain in a Buddha's time. With the understanding of listening to what the Buddha taught, someone who wishes to go forward for the wellbeing of future life and the sansaric journey can see the path he or she should practice. Here four conditions are kindly declared to follow by the blessed one. One's real success or happiness depends on how far he or she has achieved these qualities. These qualities are very useful for inner peace and final liberation from suffering.

1. The confidence (*saddhā-sampadā*):

When someone hopes to go forward on the path of liberation at the very beginning, he should have some kind of confidence in the Buddha's message which is immediately effective and visible results. When someone practices what the Buddha taught, he or she can see the results. Then his or her confidence gradually increases in the Dhamma and the Sangha too. As the result of this practice, the confidence in the triple gems gradually increases.

2. Virtue or Morality (*sīla-sampadā*):

This quality indicates the discipline in speech and behavior. When someone is knowledgeable in the Karmic law and the dependent origination, he or she tries to control his or her speech and

behavior as much as he or she can for the wellbeing of life. Having good discipline helps to successful spiritual life with concentration and insight.

3. Charity or Generosity (*cāga-sampadā*):

When someone goes on the path of liberation, he or she practices loving kindness too. Then he is generous to offer something to others concerning their qualities and needs. On the path of heaven, practicing three merits is one of the major characters. The three meritorious deeds are generosity, virtue and meditation. Practicing generosity brings great happiness to whom that is generous.

4. Wisdom or intelligence (*paññā-sampadā*):

All teachings that the Buddha illustrated focus on developing our skills to the maximum level. Real skillfulness depends on the amount of wisdom which leads to understand and overcome suffering. The purpose of Buddhist view is not to worry or suffer in any kind of issues in our life. The main goal of all Buddhist doctrines is to point out suffering and how to get rid of suffering. Similarly, Buddhism explains happiness and the way to achieve happiness. Buddhism realized and discovered the main challenges in our lives. They are old age, death and rebirth. To get rid of these challenges Buddhism always guides us to develop mindfulness and wisdom in the name of real happiness and liberation from all sufferings. By practicing this path if anyone can overcome life challenges that is the skillfulness which Buddhism describes as wisdom.

Wisdom or intelligence, which mainly helps us to overcome suffering and attain liberation from defilements, is highly praised in Buddhism. The main cause whether we are happy is the level of our wisdom. Our real success depends on how much we have achieved wisdom. Hence, wisdom has been compared to a **Gem of Men** (පඤ්ඤා නරානං රතන). **Wisdom brings purification** (පඤ්ඤාය පරිසුඡ්ඤාති). **There is no other bright light like wisdom** (නත්ථි පඤ්ඤා සමා ආභා). Wisdom is used in several terms in Pali language such as *Sammā Ditti* (සම්මා දිට්ඨි), *paññā* (පඤ්ඤා), *Amoha* (අමෝහ). Wisdom should be increased from the beginning to the maximum level of the path of enlightenment. Therefore Buddhism always guides us to gain wisdom through all kinds of advices that the supreme Buddha explained in his entire life.

We usually experience through our senses such as eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind. When objects such as forms, sounds, smells, tastes reach senses, we experience about the world. The nature of this experience is arising at the moment and instantly ceases at once. Whatever we experience through six senses, five aggregates arise at that moment. Also, they immediately cease. Five aggregates are forms (*Rupa*), feelings (*Vedanā*), perception (*Saññā*), mental formations (*Sankhāra*) and consciousness (*Viññāna*). These five things arise together and cease together. They cannot be divided. We learn them by intelligence. These five aggregates, six internal senses or external objects are not permanent. They arise with the conditions at the moment, and they cease immediately when conditions separate. However, because of our ignorance we think they are

permanent. Wisdom is the opposite of this delusion. The nature of all conditions is that; **Not being occurred (in the past) comes to an occurrence. Being occurred (at the present) will not come to (the future) occurrence.** (අනුත්ථා සම්භූතං නුත්ථා න භවිස්සති). It means if we experience something now, it was not happened in the past in the same way like now.

The Buddha explains the theory in his main teaching that in the dependent origination like this;

"This being - this comes to be" (Asmim sati idam hoti)
 With the arising of this – this arises" (Imassa uppādā idam uppajjati)
 This not being – this doesn't come to be" (Asmim asati idam na hoti)
 With the cessation of this – this ceases" (Imassa nirodhā idam nirujjati)

Also, present experience doesn't go to the future in the same way. If somebody can understand this reality, he is ready to give up extremes about the past and the future. Also, he tries to live in the present moment seeing arising and ceasing wisely with full awareness. Understanding of this impermanence which depends on the dependent origination is one of the qualities that we can practice for the wellbeing of future lies and success in this life. **This is the path to seeing the Buddha as well. He who sees the dependent origination sees the Buddha. In the same way he who sees the Buddha sees the dependent origination.** On the other side he realizes the Dhamma too. This is the path giving us real refuge that protects us forever giving the true safety.

Thus is said by the Supreme Buddha;

Dwell with yourselves as an island, with yourselves as a refuge, with no other refuge; with the Dhamma as an island, with the Dhamma as a refuge, with no other refuge. Dwell with yourselves as an island, with yourselves as a refuge, with no other refuge; with the Dhamma as an island, with the Dhamma as a refuge.

*Atta deepā bhikkhave viharatha atta saranā na anna saranā,
 Dhamma deepā bhikkhave dhamma saranā na anna saranā.*

May the Triple Gem Bless you!

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May all beings be well happy and peaceful!

(සියලු සත්ත්වයෝ සුවපත් වෙත්වා!)

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